

Canterbury Cultural Strategy

Cultural Strategies Think Kit 6 November 2025

Overview of the Canterbury District

- Located in the East Kent region of England, alongside Dover, Folkestone, and Thanet.
- Covers 30,885 hectares of rural Kent and features 21.6 km of coastline
- Population of nearly 160,000 spread over 41 villages, the seaside towns of Whitstable and Herne Bay, and the city of Canterbury itself which is recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Cultural Strategy Development pre-CoP

Why Now?

- **Devolution** and **local government reorganisation** were accelerating, making a co-created cultural strategy more urgent than ever.
- Areas with a **shared vision**, developed collaboratively with communities and partners, would be better positioned to:
 - Secure investment
 - Drive cultural growth
 - Strengthen regional identity

Background

- Research began in **October 2024**, focusing on neighbouring authorities' cultural strategies.
- Assessed the **pros and cons** of existing strategies and identified the need for a new approach that was **inclusive, sustainable, and actionable**.

Before Joining the Community of Practice launch event on 22 May, we had already:

- Delivered **four early engagement workshops** with the cultural sector in April 2025
- Conducted an **audit of cultural infrastructure** across the district



Being Part of the Community of Practice

Tip One: Don't underestimate peer support



Gained valuable insight from peers
across the country facing similar
challenges

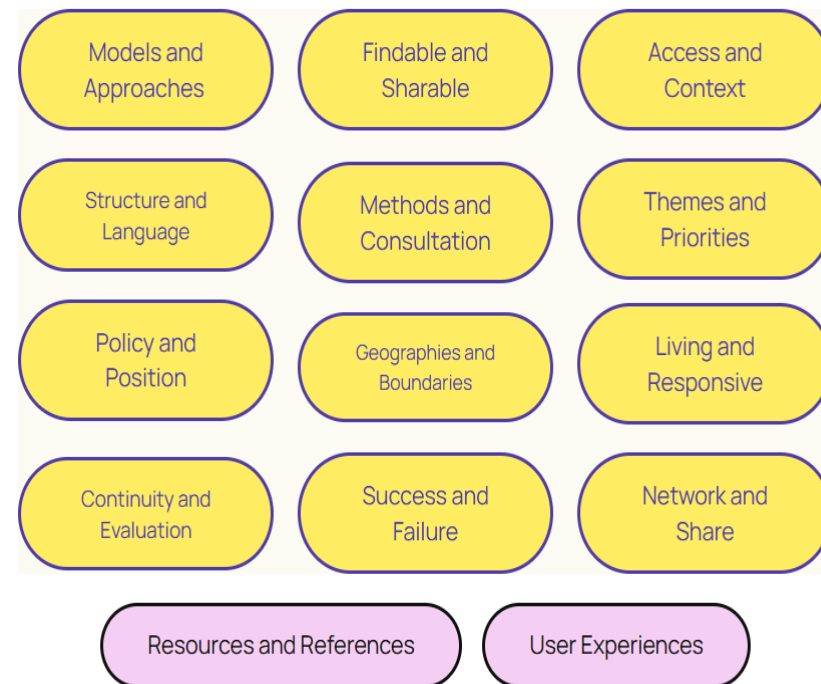
Current activities include bi-monthly
online meetings and a [LinkedIn Group](#).

Why It Matters

- **Peer support and shared learning** are powerful—don't underestimate them
- Working without a consultant or in a small culture team can feel **isolating**
- Bringing cultural organisations together after a long gap can feel **overwhelming** due to mass feedback

Think Tank Resource

Tip Two: structure and Language



Think Tank Resource

Tip Three: cultural strategies data set

[Findable and Sharable](#)

Having all the cultural strategies from across the UK in one place with links is an incredible resource of over 220 strategies.

- Provides a wide variety of strategies you might never have considered
- Helps identify geographical similarities, e.g., coastal elements
- Enables comparison beyond immediate neighbours

Were We
Are Now

**Public
consultation**
open until 12
January 2026



Cabinet approved the draft 10-year Cultural Strategy to go for public consultation on 6 October 2025

[Public consultation open until 12 January 2026](#)

The strategy sets out how the council, organisations, businesses and communities can work together to:

- Better understand cultural assets
- Support long-term investment
- Increase participation in culture
- Join up opportunities for cultural delivery

Thank you

Any questions:
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